



EN ROUTE TO THE

KLONDIKE

A SERIES OF
PHOTOGRAPHIC VIEWS

CHILKOOT PASS
SKAGUAY TRAIL
LAKE LINDERMAN
LAKE BENNETT

Part III.

ST. MICHAELS
DAWSON CITY
FORTY MILE CREEK
YUKON RIVER

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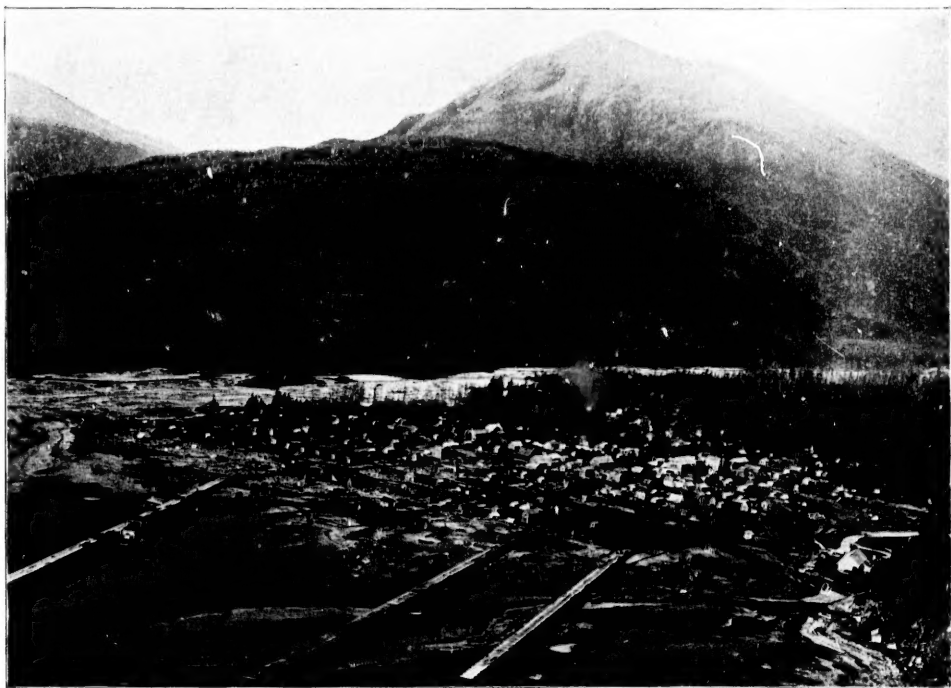
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A WINTER SCENE

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SKAGUAY, OCTOBER, 1897.—The town of Skaguay at present has a population of nearly 3,000, and there is every reason to anticipate a considerable increase at an early date. Skaguay is of as much relative importance to the trail named after it as its northern neighbor, Dyea, is to the Dyea Trail. A wagon road is being made from the town to Summit Lake, about twenty six miles ahead, the work having been undertaken by a local transportation company. The road is to be fourteen feet wide, covered with gravel, and, if possible, to be kept open the year round. Skaguay has three docks which are shown in the photograph, and besides several hundred frame and log houses it has six hotels, fifteen restaurants and thirteen general merchandise stores.



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FRUIT STORE, SKAGUAY.—The store shown in the foreground is the place where fruit is retailed at prices that would shock purchasers at home. Even when the temperature mocks the inadequate registers of many local thermometers and the snow-capped mountains spread a spotless mantle over their own gigantic proportions, fruit is a welcome edible to the miner even if he is free of scurvy, which is one of the annoyances of mining camps in this region. As the photograph will indicate, this store is a popular resort for miners who desire to discuss gold nuggets and new "claims" which are prolific of conversation. The tall wooden structure in the background to the right of the fruit store is a bakery.



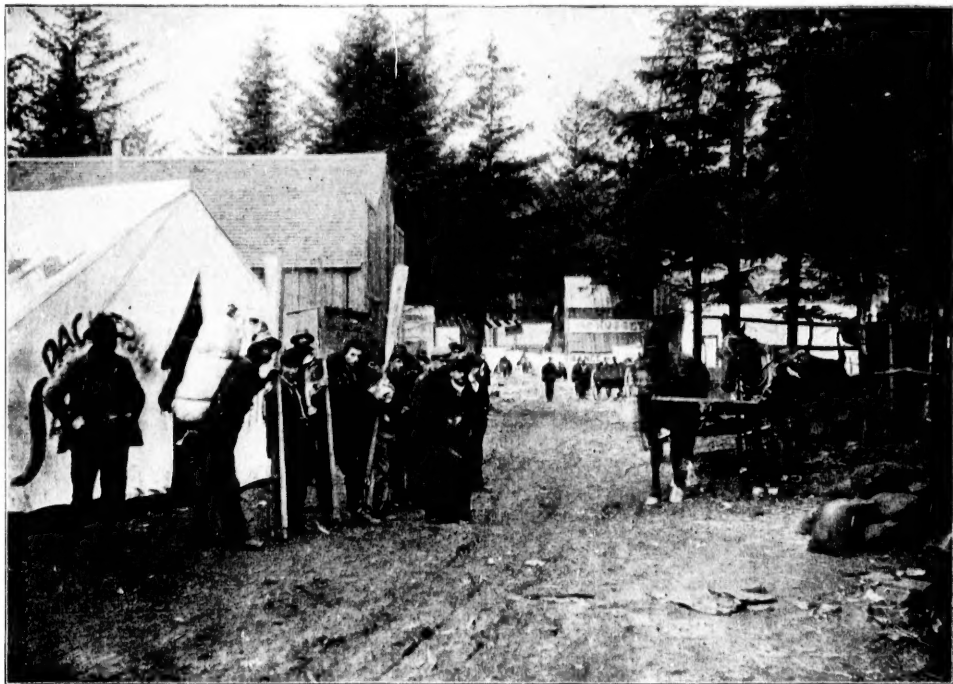
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KLONDIKE TRADING COMPANY'S STORE AT SKAGUAY, ALASKA.—Although the appearance of this store is not quite so pretentious as the name, a considerable business was done here during the season. Tradesmen are very sanguine as to the future, and remarkable energy is being exercised in the effort to cater to prospectors on their way to the gold fields. The local water system consists of a simple board flume which brings an ample supply of good water from a lake on the mountain side. Between this town and Dyea there exists the up to date convenience of a six mile telephone; and the intellect of this embryo city is provided for by the publication of that modern necessity, a local newspaper.



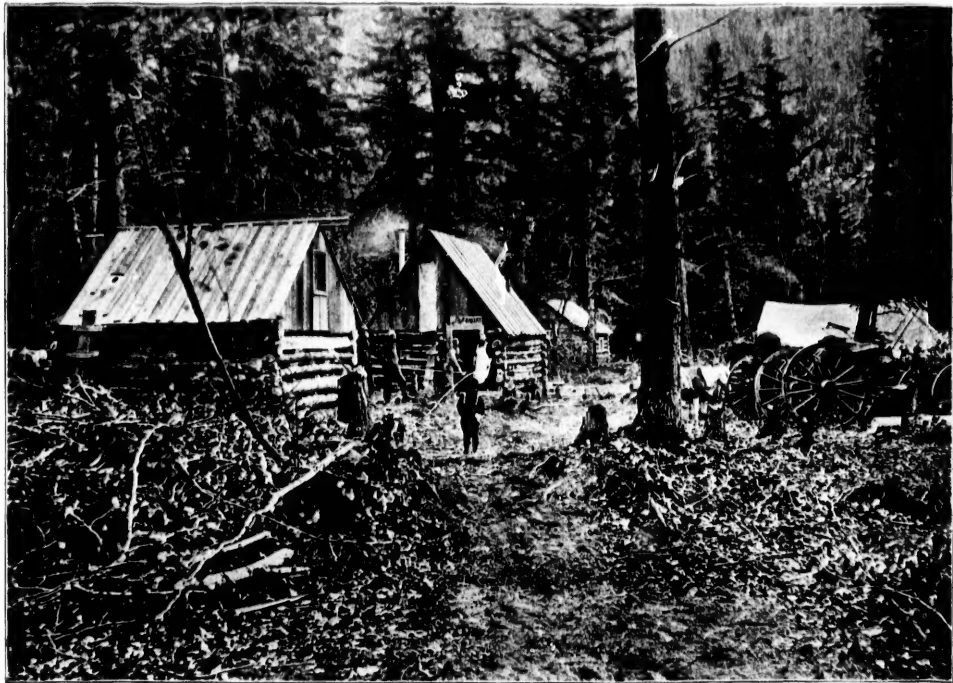
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MAIN STREET, RAGTOWN, SKAGUAY TRAIL.—This may appear at first sight to be too primeval to merit the appellation of "Main Street," but modern pioneers and founders of cities act upon the plan that it is desirable to give a thoroughfare a good name and let it justify the christening when it grows older. In this case already the adjuncts of civilization have begun to ornament the highway, and the talismanic signs of "Restaurant," "Goods Bought and Sold," etc., are beginning to catch the eye of the enterprising miner, not forgetting the "tenderfoot," who, by the time he has reached Skaguay, will probably have learned that it is advisable to sell his gun and buy a pick, although he may lose in the transaction.



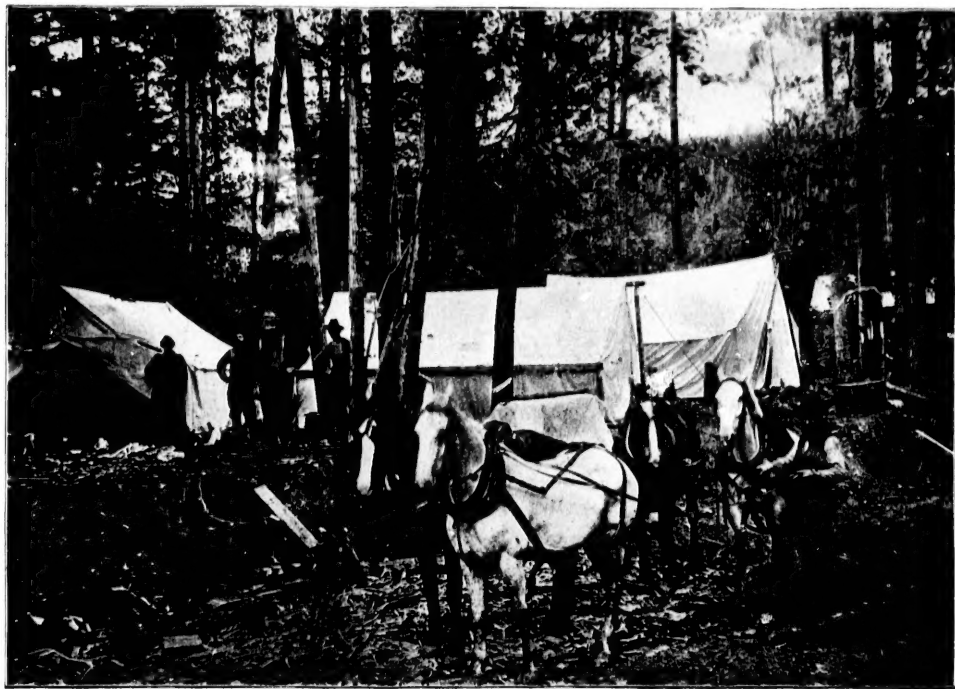
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BROADWAY, SKAGWAY.—This is a very busy thoroughfare and the expedition was fortunate in getting the group of men in the foreground to stand still while the picture was taken. The hardy miners and packers far away from their kinsfolk are not forgetful of their friends in the cities whence they come, and it is mostly a pleasant thought to them that their features may be recognized in the photograph by some of their acquaintances thousands of miles away. To the left of the picture can be seen an establishment where packers are engaged, and in the background can be seen a dance hall where the heavily shod prospector can indulge in Terpsichorean delights while the arrangements are being completed.



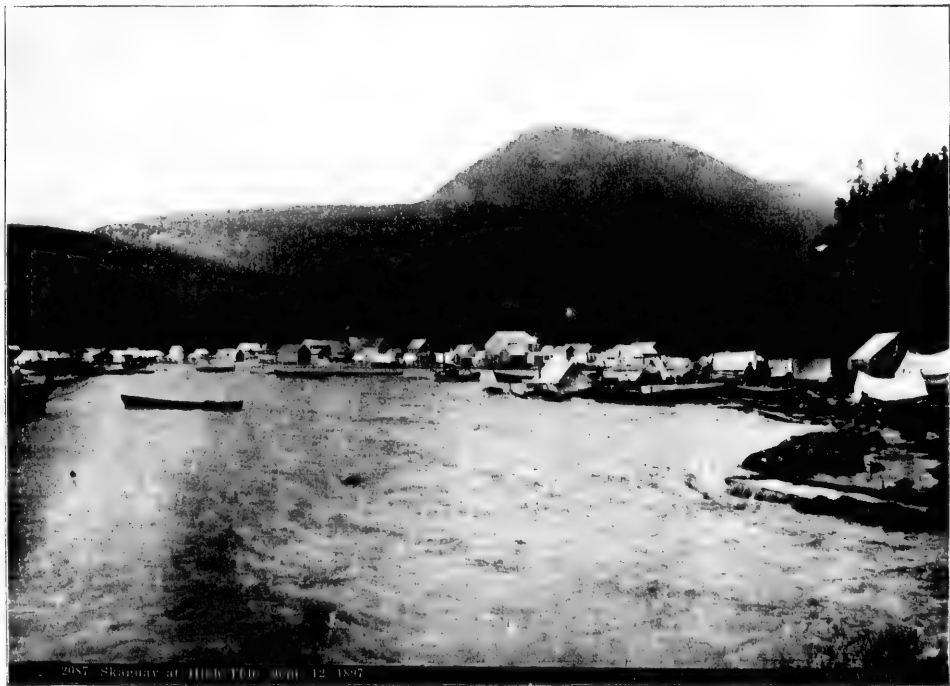
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RESIDENCE STREET, SKAGUAY.—Here is one of Skaguay's principal residence streets which is being rapidly cleared of timber and in a couple of seasons will probably be unrecognizable. The inhabitants are not half hearted in their belief of the future of Skaguay and are confident of being able to handle the "rush" business. It is said that when the river is frozen and the storms have eased up there will be about two months when it will be easy to "sled it" on the ice right up the frozen bed of the Skaguay river. There is no steep climb to the summit or steep descent on the other side and these conditions they think will last until the road that is being made is completed.

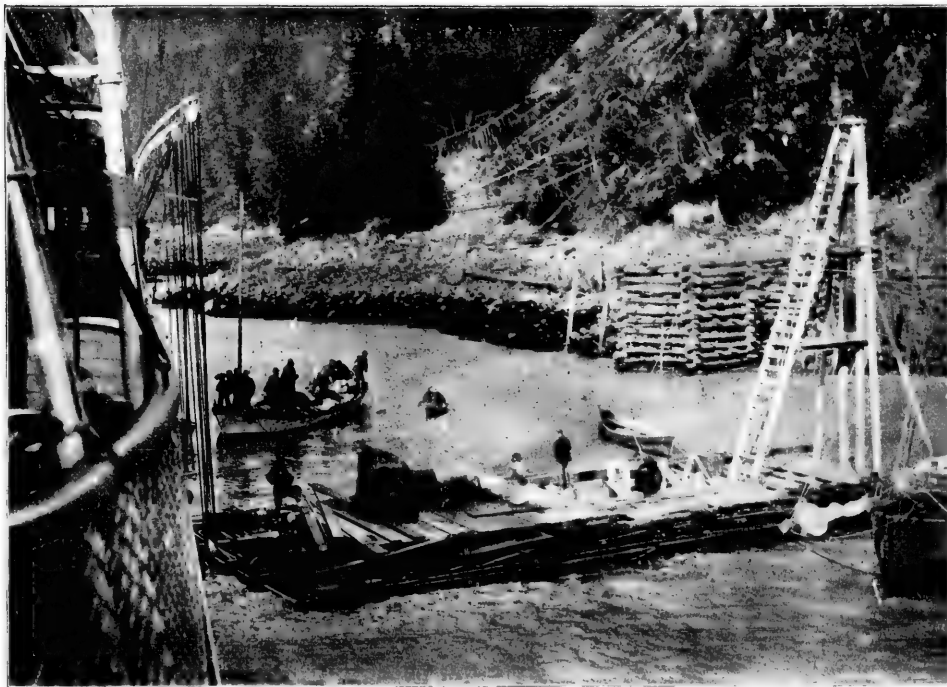


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SUBURBS OF SKAGUAY.—The preliminary work of the pioneer is to remove timber, and this was practically the only occupation at this spot when the photograph was taken. There is not an oversupply of women in Alaska, and the lady standing in front of the canvas residence is one of the comparative few who have had the courage to tempt the admiration of hardy men who are notoriously subject to the refining influences of noble women. There is every likelihood of many plucky women going to the Klondike this year and it is not believed that they will have any cause to regret the step. Even if they do begin by doing domestic work at the modest sum of \$40.00 a week there are sympathetic miners around with piles of gold dust.



SKAGUAY AT HIGH TIDE.—In less than two months the population of this town had nearly trebled. The natural facilities for landing passengers and supplies were being rapidly utilized for the convenience of travelers. At high tide the place is alive with small craft and at low tide the docks enable steamships to unload without any unnecessary delay. When the photograph was taken it was difficult to believe that a town of this size could spring up in so short a time out in a wild country like Alaska with all its natural disadvantages to dishearten the pioneers. But the trail of the gold-seekers was not to be ignored while American enterprise is ever ready to step into the breach and cater to the wants of mankind.



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SKAGWAY, ALASKA.—“We are going to be in it any way the cat jumps.” This expression was made use of by a prominent man in Skagway and it practically conveys the intention of the townsmen in general. Not only are they discussing the best means of competing for the patronage of the miners on the overland trip, but they are rapidly developing all kinds of conveniences. The small boat in the picture is occupied in ferrying goods to the steamer which is at anchor waiting for high tide before proceeding on its journey. The raft beside the steamer is an odd looking structure, but its usefulness can be readily appreciated by those who have had any experience in this neighborhood.



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SKAGUAY AT LOW TIDE.—The salt water terminates at Skaguay, which is eighty-five miles from Juneau. In a sheltered position is a well constructed wharf where ocean steamers can run up and be moored at any time. Besides this there is excellent protection from storms. The photograph was taken at low tide when a large tract of land is exposed by the receding waters, which leave the small craft high and dry. The beach is never covered to any very great depth. It is here that the voyager disembarks to proceed overland along the Skaguay trail, which starts at the mouth of the Skaguay River, about two miles from the head of Dyce Inlet. This is the trail that runs by way of the White Pass.

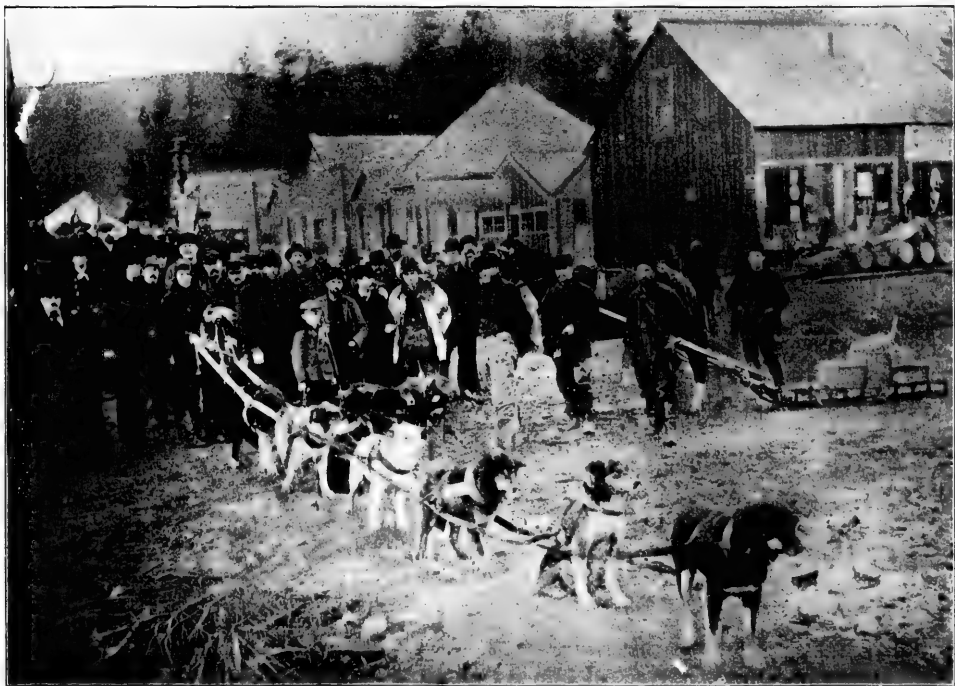


STEAMERS QUEEN AND GEORGE W. ELDER AT SKAGUAY.—The steamer Queen, which is a speedy boat and affords excellent accommodation, has carried thousands of tourists to Alaska during the past excursion seasons. The George W. Elder, which is not so commodious a boat, sails direct for Portland. Both vessels had just arrived at the head of steam navigation on Lynn Canal laden with crowds of gold-seekers and tons upon tons of supplies. Two streams follow a natural outlet to the sea on each side of the high point of land on the right—on one side the Skaguay River, on the other the Dyea. It is sometimes difficult to decide which route to take. Both the Dyea and Skaguay trails have advantages which appeal differently to many travelers.



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NEAR THE SUMMIT, SKAGUAY TRAIL.—From Porcupine Hill the descent is about 500 feet in one mile. Then crossing the Skaguay River the traveler ascends about 300 feet in two and a half miles, and after again crossing the creek he goes up the hillside nearly 1,000 feet in less than one and a half miles. But this is only a part of the climb. For nearly a mile the trail winds along a high level toward the steep summit slope. Now comes a descent of 100 feet which brings us right to the foot, when up, up we go, 900 feet to the summit of the White Pass. This photograph was taken when the summit was almost within reach. The pass lies through a box canyon encompassed by granite peaks and the way is comparatively easy.



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MONTANA KID AND DOG TEAM AT SKAGUAY.—This is the famous dog team which made the trip from Dawson City to Skaguay in twenty-four days in midwinter. The regular dog sled is made up of a narrow box about four feet long with the front half covered. It is mounted on a floor twice the length of the box, the whole structure resting on runners. The passenger sits in the box securely protected from freezing and with only his head and shoulders projecting. The dog whip is formidable to the dog when used by a skillful hand, but a terror to the user if he doesn't understand it. About four pounds in weight, with a nine-inch handle and thirty feet of lash, it is a disagreeable weapon when it encircles the user's neck or takes a fancy to his face instead of a dog hide.



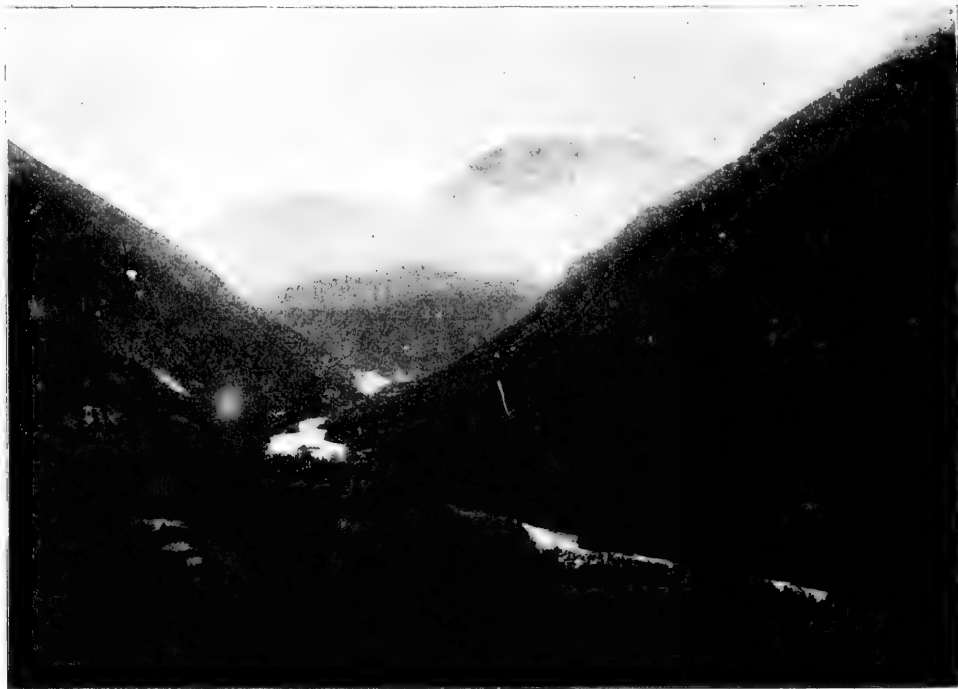
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BRIDGE OVER SKAGUAY RIVER.—However insignificant this rude structure may appear, its usefulness is fully appreciated by those who have forded Alaskan rivers of necessity. When one knows the depth of the water and how to avoid treacherous holes it is a pleasure to sometimes ford a stream. But when ignorance of the bottom creates the probability of getting high rubber boots filled with a too refreshing liquid the fascination disappears. The traveler who is bound for the heart of the gold fields, via either one of the popular trails, will soon learn that the act of crossing rivers and streams descends from the realms of novelty to a commonplace occurrence. The man who goes with the idea of novelty will probably return with the hope of meeting bridges.



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LUMBER YARD, SKAGUAY.—The plentiful supply of timber in the neighborhood of Skaguay will furnish material for some big industries when the growing population makes demand. At the time this photograph was taken there was a large amount of lumber stored in the yards, and this shows one of the principal ones where a considerable business was being done. Skaguay is a lively town and the growth during the fall of 1897 was remarkable. And when it is remembered that a railroad over the White Pass is not only contemplated but surveys are being made, it will be seen that the inhabitants are justified in praising the town. It is said that the railroad will be completed this year.



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SKAGUAY RIVER FROM TOP OF FIRST HILL.—At this point an excellent view of the winding river can be had. The scenery in all its massive grandeur surrounds one on every side; and far in the distance, like a streak of bright silver, the serpentine stream wends its way through gulch and valley, over rocky bed and sandy bottom, here with a musical ripple, there with a dull plash, ever onward, ever running, ever escaping from a humble source and losing its identity in the ocean of waters or gathering bulk as it goes and becoming a distinctive local feature. So does the ambitious miner either get lost in the great aggregation or live to bask in the sunshine of Dame Fortune.



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FROM TOP OF SECOND HILL, SKAGUAY.—This picturesque forest view was taken while the expedition enjoyed a short rest on the top of the second hill. With the roots of trees and broken branches bestrewing the path of the traveler, he must needs be careful lest an awkward stumble delay progress. During the months of February, March and April, and sometimes May, the snow makes the surface of the trail smoother and less difficult to get over; and many claim that it is then a far better route than the Dyea Trail. From the summit of the White Pass to the head of Lake Bennett, nearly twenty-four miles ahead, the trail winds through a very rocky, glaciated country so broken by valleys that much more climbing is necessary.



ON PORCUPINE INCLINE, SKAGUAY TRAIL.—This is not a particularly inviting part of the trail, but it has to be encountered by every one taking the journey, and it is just as well to face it boldly at the start. The Indians object to using this trail but that is no reason why the white man should ignore it. The Indians are in terror of a great many things that the white man smiles at. The incline shown in the picture is known as the "Switchback." It is a mile and a half below the precipice, and consists of a wild zigzag path winding its way amid rocks and trees with treacherous upturned roots. In the background can be seen a pack horse on its way to Lake Linderman.



2070. Bridge over Porcupine Creek, Skaguay Trail.

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BRIDGE OVER PORCUPINE CREEK, SKAGUAY TRAIL.—To get along at the rate of three and one-half miles an hour seems slow to the miner who is bound for the gold fields where nearly every one is said to be striking it "rich;" but in the neighborhood of the stop here pictured the greater number of travelers are well satisfied with one mile an hour. This is the acknowledged rate of progress. The very unsubstantial bridge is about seven miles out from Skaguay. From here to the summit of Porcupine Hill the trail leads through a thickly wooded district along the side of the mountain. It is a pretty bad piece of climbing with a sharp ascent of about 700 feet, and the natural beauty of the forest is mostly forgotten in the desire to get to the top.



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SKAGUAY TRAIL AT LITTLE LAKE.—This is a fanciful spot, full of romantic suggestiveness, and in the midsummer months no more suitable place could be found where the surroundings are likely to inspire an ardent lover with vows of undying devotion. The only disadvantage is that one does not find anyone with ears fitted to appreciate words of inspiration. The summer girl has not yet invaded this region, and unless a highly ornamented squaw happen along with a pack on her back, the sentiments, however musical, are wasted on the balmy air. The small sheet of water named Little Lake is a sample of many similar scenes in this almost unknown country, and the observer wonders at the transformation that takes place when the rigors of winter set in.



HUNGRY MAN'S RETREAT AT PORCUPINE CREEK, SKAGUAY TRAIL.— This is a restaurant in the wilderness where you pay a dollar for a meal and frequently get something you are not looking for. Yet one's appetite is such after these weary marches that anything is eaten with a relish, particularly if a little fresh meat is included. The most prevalent trouble in this part is scurvy, which is the result of a scarcity of vegetables and fresh meat. A diet of beans, salt pork and bad bacon with flour at \$50.00 a sack brings trouble; and a restaurant in the wilderness is a very welcome spectacle even if one does have to pay a dollar for a four-ounce steak.



PRECIPICE, PORCUPINE HILL.—This terror of argonauts is one of the difficulties that is met with on the Skeaguay Trail. The picture here presented shows the summit of Porcupine Hill. One can look down a steep precipitous wall of stone and undergrowth a distance of one hundred feet. The whole trail is a roadway of extremes. At one time the location is elevated as here shown, but much of the pathway leads over low boggy places, over streams and rocks, and along the shores of small lakes and Alaskan swamps.

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and rocks, and along the shores of small lakes and Alaskan swamps.



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A WINTER SCENE.—This photograph was taken just as "harren winter, with his wrathful, nipping cold," was beginning to take charge of the Klondike for some months ahead, probably until the beginning of June. Being oftentimes without a thermometer the miners frequently leave their mercury out all night. If they find it frozen in the morning they come to the conclusion that it is too cold to work. This conclusion will not be disputed by any one who may happen to be near where the mercury does freeze.

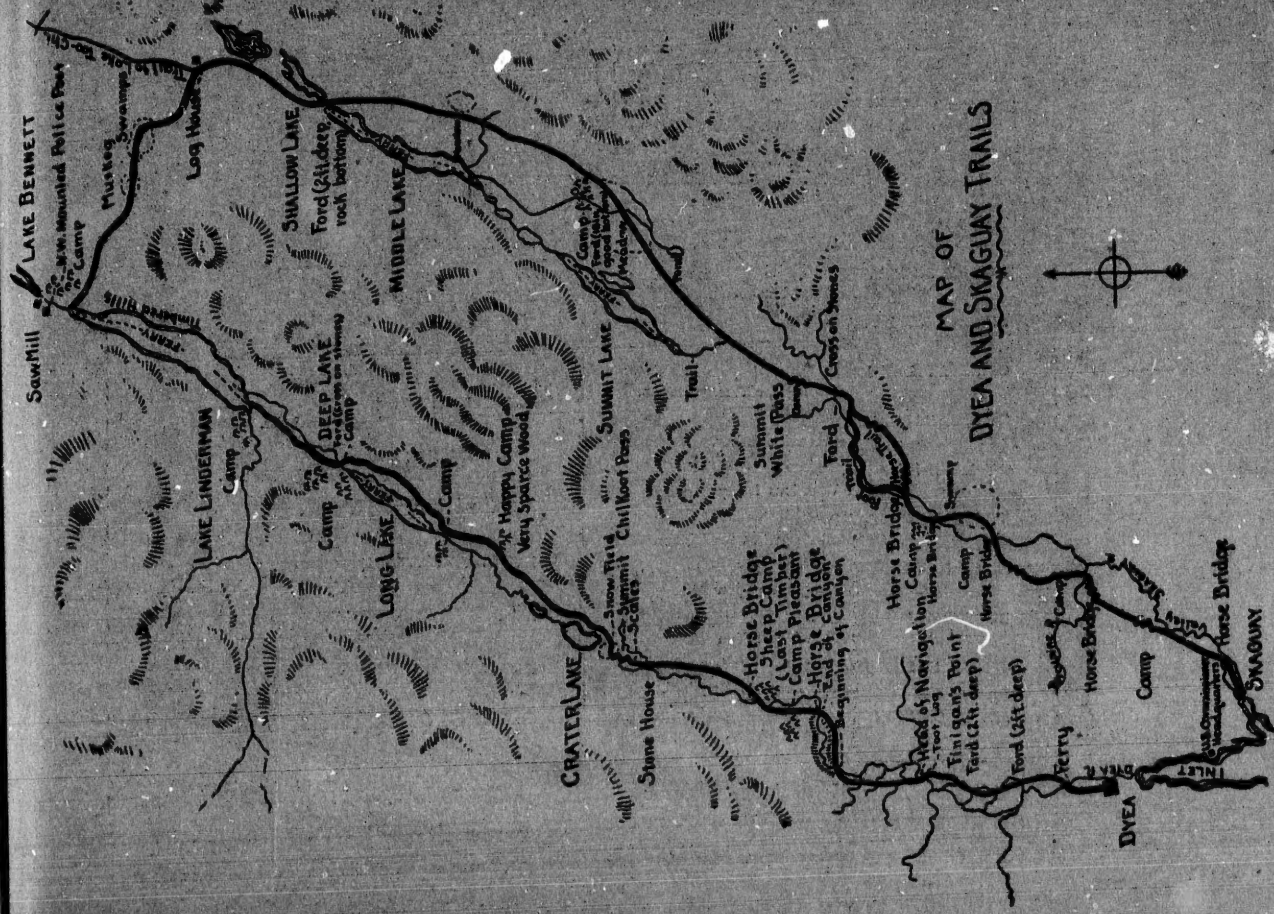


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CHILKAT INDIAN GROUP, ALASKA.—The child in the foreground is somewhat terror-stricken at the appearance of the camera and no one member of the group is altogether at ease. The old lady in the center with the white handkerchief over her head is affecting a smile of contempt, although she has closed her eyes to shut out the dangerous-looking machine. There is more superstition than sentiment about the Indians in this region. They are almost heartless and absolutely mercenary. They will not aid each other without payment; and the white man has to bargain very carefully to avoid being cheated by their cunning. The rush overland has given them experience, and it is a hard thing for the Christian bargainer to get against.

Sawmill LAKE BENNETT

U.S. W. Mounted Police Post
Camp
Muskog



What Part IV Will Contain

THE END OF THE TRAIL

Awaiting the Packers.

IN THE SHIP YARD

At Lake Linderman.

AFLOAT AT LAST

After the Boat is Built.

CAMP AT LAKE LINDERMAN

Preparing for Transportation.

IN THE RAPIDS

Between the Lakes.

AT LAKE BENNETT

A Vexatious Delay.

IN WELBON'S CAMP

Good Appetites for Dinner.

NEAR LAKE BENNETT

A Dangerous Spot.

BUSY BOAT BUILDERS

"Made While You Wait."

WHITE HORSE RAPIDS

Skilful Boatmen Required.

MILES CANYON

More Picturesque Than Safe.

DAWSON CITY

Log Cabins and Millionaires.

MINERS' HUTS

In Dawson City.

EUCLID AVENUE

A Center of Activity.

SAWMILL AT DAWSON

Big Wages Paid.

SHOOTING THE RAPIDS

On the Lewes River.

SAILING ON ICE

Across the Lake.

SPEARING FOR SALMON

An Exciting Situation.

BONANZA CREEK

A Famous Location.

ICE IN THE YUKON

Below Dawson City.

AT FORTY MILE POST

The Yukon Frozen.

FORTY MILE CITY

Still a Source of Wealth.

CIRCLE CITY

An Ice Blockade.

U. S. CUSTOM HOUSE

Circle City in Midwinter.



